

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, September 12, 1996

Published Since 1877

## Seminary professor says...

# Opposition to gambling underscored in Scripture

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP) — The letter appeared in a Mississippi newspaper under the heading, "Bible doesn't say gambling is a sin."

A man named Roger wrote of searching his Bible and concordance and finding nothing in the Scripture to say gambling is a sin. However, there were several references to the casting of lots. Why, even the disciples used that method to choose a successor to Judas.

That being so, how could one oppose gambling on moral grounds?

Easy, Joe Trull insists. Look again at the principles set forth in the Bible.

"Perhaps many Christians don't take gambling seriously because they cannot find a direct commandment against gambling and they read in the Bible that some leaders seemed to 'gamble' to determine God's will," notes Trull, professor of Christian ethics at New Orleans Seminary.

Of course, there are plenty of economic and social reasons to oppose gambling, Trull points out — it diverts money from other legitimate businesses; it creates problem gamblers and the social costs that accompany those addictions; it negatively impacts young people; and its reality just does not live up to its promise.

However, Baptists must begin in their opposition to gambling with an examination of God's Word on the issue, Trull suggests. They must come to an understanding that the Christian way is incompatible with gambling, he says.

"Whatever else we do, Baptist people must possess a clear biblical and theological understanding of this moral issue.

"Let me say at the outset, without stuttering or stammering, that the Bible is not silent about gambling.

"While no direct command jumps out of the Bible to guide us, the moral ideals of the Scriptures clearly oppose the practice of gambling."

Trull cites several key biblical principles that should guide Christians in their moral understanding of gambling:

▲ Gambling questions the sovereign rule of God over our lives. "Can anyone deny that gambling majors on greed, the fast buck, and materialism?" Trull asks.

▲ Gambling violates the central moral imperative of the Bible — the law of love. "Love entreats; gambling mistreats. Love strengthens; gambling weakens. Love builds up; gambling tears down. Love never fails; gambling ever fails."

▲ Gambling encourages covetousness and stealing. "In one sense, gambling is robbery by mutual consent. A group of people agree to play a game of chance in which one person takes what others have wagered without any exchange of goods or services. Is that not stealing?"

▲ Gambling violates the biblical principles of the stewardship of possessions. Christians are called to be good stewards of all God has given them in this world and to use their resources for God's glory and human good, Trull reminds.

"Gambling is wrong because it encourages pleasure and profit at the loss and pain

of other people. The evening news may tell the story of one winner, but it has not time to recount the thousands of suicides, broken homes, embezzled funds, thefts, frauds, and addictions that are a part of the story of every lottery and casino. Those who suffer most from gambling are the poor."

Gambling also is poor stewardship because gamblers are losers, Trull adds. The odds of flipping "heads" on a coin 20 times in a row (one in 524,288) is better than the odds of winning the Florida lottery (one in 13,983,820), he points out.

▲ Gambling depreciates the value of honest work. "The honest worker produces goods and services; the gambler, if he or she wins at all, brings home someone else's money," the New Orleans Seminary professor states.

▲ Gambling destroys Christian influence. "Christian influence should be exerted in positive ways to build up community life in which the young and weak are protected, not exploited. As salt and light, believers are to use moral persuasion and legitimate power to influence public policy for the common good. The Christian who gambles is part of the problem, rather than part of the solution."

▲ Gambling corrupts the God-ordained purpose of the state. God's purpose is for the state to establish justice, Trull says. Indeed, the apostle Paul

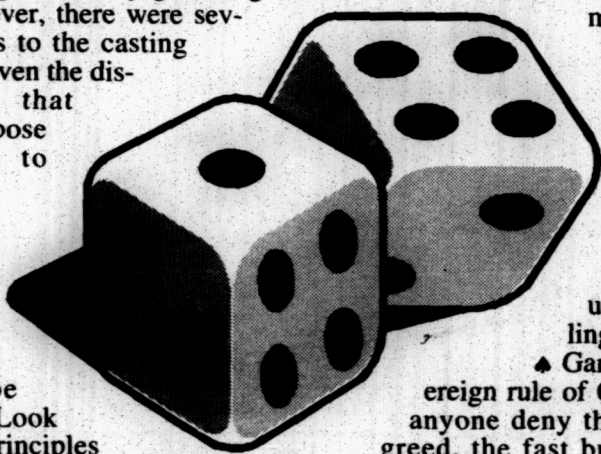
described the role of government as "God's servant for your good," the professor adds. "The apostle could not imagine God approving any state which uses a basic human weakness (gambling) as a means for collecting taxes, becomes the sponsor and promoter of a swindle which always pays back less than people have put in, and becomes so entangled with the income received from the victims that it must promote gambling to keep the revenues coming in."

Trull acknowledges a person does not have to be a Christian to find good reasons to oppose gambling. The economic and social costs of the practice are staggering enough. But he also notes when the principles and values of the Bible are added to the mix, Christians should have little trouble determining what their stance on the headline issue should be.

"Seen in the light of biblical principles, gambling is personally selfish, morally irresponsible, and socially destructive," Trull said.

"Yes, the Bible does speak against gambling. Read the Word of God and you will discover precepts, principles, (and) models... that call every disciple of Christ to a life incompatible with gambling."

Information in this article was drawn from an address by Trull and a chapter in his upcoming book, "Christian Ethics: Facing Tough Issues with Biblical Principles," to be released by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers.



Ministers must keep in mind that people living in the Information Age attend church to find more meaning in their lives — not more information for their minds, according to leadership consultant and pastor Erwin McManus of Los Angeles. "Information is no longer the viable commodity if you want to talk about the future. Information now has the worth of paper. Everybody has information who wants it," he said. Instead, ministers must be able to give meaning to the flood of data people encounter every day, McManus pointed out. The present situation is much different than pastors encountered even a generation ago, when ministers were often better educated and more informed than the community at large, he observed. "My job (as pastor) is to help people in this world of complexity figure out what are the simple things that pull everything together which give life meaning," he stressed. McManus believes the decades-long emphasis on science and relationalism is fading into a postmodern culture where secularism and relativism will prevail. "We will become a nation of many gods," he said.

The boom in demand for teenage counseling is increasing the amount of time youth ministers must spend in counseling sessions, reports Southern Baptist psychologist Joe Richardson of Nacogdoches, Texas. Richardson said professional literature indicates that up to 30% of youths have encountered child sexual abuse, while 6% are neurotic, and 11% suffer from psychophysiological (mind-body related) problems such as colitis. "We've got a huge problem, and the sad thing is our thinking is, 'But that's not my youth group.' We had better broaden our thinking, because kids have bigger problems than we think," he said. Richardson cautioned youth ministers not to get in over their heads and to remember that there are times when specialized counseling expertise is needed. "If you are not a psychotherapist, don't get into long-term counseling with youth. Don't get involved in situations with lengthy counseling. When it begins to hurt you (emotionally), get out. You are in a perfect position to insist they get the help they need," he said.

**10 years ago**  
Northwest Association in Hernando and Broadmoor Church, Jackson, send volunteers to help erect Rimrock Church in Billings, Mont. Members of that small, pioneer church had studied construction and will try to build the church entirely on their own.

**20 years ago**  
Brothers John and Jim Landrum, sons of former First Church, Grenada, pastor John Landrum, are called into Christian service on the same day and will serve in locations 2,000 miles apart: John at Mission Way Church, Fremont, Calif., and Jim at First Church, Newton.

**50 years ago**  
The federal Civilian Production Administration approves an application from the Mississippi Baptist Orphanage to begin construction on a \$50,000 dairy barn, hog barn, and bull paddock. The pay-as-you-go project has been fully funded by Mississippi Baptists.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

WILLIAM H. PERKINS JR.

## You're the bullseye

If you're a 45-year-old white male with a high school diploma and an annual household income of \$31,000, and you wonder why you're so popular in Mississippi casino ads, there's a good reason.

You're the typical casino patron in this state.

That's the conclusion of a just-completed study by the Stennis Institute of Government at Mississippi State University, which polled 807 Mississippians residing in both casino and non-casino counties.

Among the interesting facts contained in the study (followed by some editorial observations in italics) are:

— Residents of casino counties made more than twice as many casino visits annually when compared to residents of non-casino counties, but residents of non-casino counties lost twice as much money per visit when they did go to casinos.

*Could it be that residents of casino counties have wised up to the intent of all those casinos' sucker games — namely, to move money from your pocket to theirs?*

— The average family in a casino county with income of less than

\$10,000 loses 10% of their income to casino games, while the same residents with income of \$30,000-\$40,000 lose only 3.9% of their income even though they wager more than twice as much as the poor family.

*Legalized gambling has always been a sleazy way for politicians to impose a regressive tax on the people who can least afford it, while allowing them to pander to a moneyed special interest and announce to their constituency they have held the line on taxes by finding a "harmless" way to support public schools and other worthy causes.*

— The income bracket least likely to spend money at casinos is the \$40,000-\$50,000 range.

*Seems the people in higher income brackets, many of whom derive their income from wisely managing money, know the difference between a solid investment risk and a get-rich-quick, foolish waste of resources.*

— Only 6% of gamblers from casino counties said they would have saved or invested the money if they hadn't gambled it away, and 8% of non-casino county residents agreed with them.

*What a sad commentary on the state of materialism in our culture. While the rate of savings per household has declined for decades as our desire for more "things" has skyrocketed, the greedy stampede to the glamour and false potential of casinos only hastens our slide down that self-absorbed road to destruction.*

Mr. and Mrs. (and Miss) Mississippi Baptist, are you frequenting the state's casinos?

Are you there just for the fun or are you addicted, and how do you tell the difference?

When you walk through the casino parking lot, do you simply ignore the hungry, unwashed children locked in dilapidated cars while their parents gamble hour after hour in air-conditioned luxury?

Do you go to casinos just for the fabulous food, and if so, why is your stomach making moral and ethical decisions for you?

Satan has a talent for clothing sin in bright lights, seductive pleasure, and the allure of worldly riches. In gambling, he has found the perfect means of twisting our natural ambition into destruction.

Don't fall into that trap. You can just stay away.



## Guest opinion...

## Christian stewardship: right choices result in eternal benefits

By Hal Fisher

American poet Robert Frost once wrote of diverging paths and the choice each of us makes as to which path we will follow. In like manner, Christians must select a path of estate stewardship.

One direction is the path of "do nothing" and does not lead to commitment. The other path, however, leads to an ultimate expression of Christian stewardship.

Almost thirty years ago, a "gentle giant" named James Burns of Brookhaven decided which path he would follow. That decision resulted in a lasting expression of his lifelong commitment to God and his responsibility as a Christian steward.

Burns, a nurseryman, understood the importance of making right choices. He and his wife built Brookhaven Nurseries, a successful shrubbery and landscaping business.

They ventured out into related fields. He began growing gladiolus cut-flowers for wholesale florists in the northern and mid-western United States. He patented a tall, shell-pink variety of gladiolus, which he named "Dixie-Jewell" after his wife.

He made right choices as it related to his pursuit to serve his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. A committed Christian and life deacon at First Church, Brookhaven, he spent the last several years of his life reading and studying God's Word after poor health pre-

vented regular church attendance.

He established the Lydia and James Burns Fund in 1967 with a \$10,000 gift to

the Lord, having been preceded in death by his wife. Since the beginning of the fund,

## The Mississippi Baptist Foundation



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the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. Terms of the gift called for the Foundation to pay the Burns \$519.96 a year for the rest of their lives, with the income going to Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton at their deaths.

he had received over \$16,000 from his \$10,000 gift while watching the principal value of the fund grow to just over \$42,000.

Mississippi College will now receive the fund's income each year—not on the origi-

nal \$10,000 but on the present \$42,000.

Because of a path taken many years ago, the Burns will have a part until Christ returns in providing Christian education for students at Mississippi College.

Choices. We all make them.

What choices have you made regarding the material assets with which the Lord has blessed you?

What path have you taken regarding your responsibilities as a Christian steward? Do you have a will? Do you have a plan?

The Mississippi Baptist Foundation can help you fulfill your estate stewardship responsibilities.

Perhaps you would like to make a gift but need the income earned by the gift for your lifetime. If so, we can help.

Perhaps you have an insurance policy you no longer need that can be used to start an endowment fund to benefit your church. There are many possibilities.

September is Baptist Foundation Month across the Southern Baptist Convention. For more information on the programs of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, write us at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Fisher is director, Mississippi Baptist Foundation.

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# Reighard leaving First Church, Atlanta, over role dispute

ATLANTA (BP) — Ike Reighard, senior associate pastor of Atlanta's First Church since January, resigned Sept. 8, apparently in a dispute over responsibilities and titles.

Reighard's primary responsibility at First Church was to preach at the church's northeast Atlanta site. In a prepared statement to the north Atlanta congregation, Charles Stanley, senior pastor, said Reighard expected to

be promoted to co-pastor and have equal authority as the pastor.

"The Oversight Committee as well as myself felt we were clear verbally and in writing that no such guarantee was being made," Stanley said.

Reighard said in a written statement that he was not promised the position, but was told the congregation would vote within six months on whether he should have the title. A vote was never taken.

After discussing the issue with Stanley and two advisors, Reighard said he was told to meet privately with the Oversight Committee or he would be fired.

"Rather than risk going to the meeting alone under duress, I submitted my resignation Sept. 8 to save the embarrassment for my family," Reighard said.

Stanley said he took Reighard's request to be considered co-pastor to the Oversight Committee, but

the committee rejected it. "In my judgement their decision was the right one," Stanley added.

Reighard said he would not seriously consider another position for weeks or perhaps months, according to "The Atlanta Journal Constitution." The northeast congregation was described as silent and stunned after Stanley read Reighard's resignation letter.

In his resignation letter to the congregation, Reighard said, "With every fiber of our beings Robin and I believe that God called us here. Therefore you can imagine our confusion, hurt and sorrow at this moment. However, it remains true among us humans that misunderstandings arise and are, in fact, virtually unavoidable."

Reighard was pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga., for 18 years before taking the First Church post. The Fayetteville church grew to more than 5,000 members under his leadership and was the second fastest-growing church in the Southern Baptist Convention in the early 1980s. He has been president of the Georgia Convention and Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference. He is currently a member of the Home Mission Board board of directors.

When Reighard joined the First Church staff in January, he said, "I haven't been this nervous since I ran for fifth-grade class president." In January Stanley called Reighard "the right man for this position," describing him as a godly man, good preacher, and respected pastor.

The previous pastor for the northeast congregation was Stanley's son who resigned last year in the wake of divorce proceedings between his parents.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

## The Baptist Record

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### Fortune 500 company...

## WorldCom moving headquarters to MC property

By William H. Perkins Jr.

The head of the nation's fourth-largest telecommunications provider confirmed Sept. 9 that the multi-billion dollar company will purchase 84 acres from Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College (MC) and relocate its corporate headquarters near the school's Clinton campus.

Bernie Ebberts, president and chief executive officer of Jackson-based WorldCom, Inc., said his company plans to construct a four-building, campus-like office complex on the undeveloped site, which is across Interstate 20 from the school's main facilities.

MC officials expressed confidence that the proximity of the company to the school will result in a close working relationship between the two entities.

Ebberts, a native of Canada, is a graduate of MC and currently serves on the school's trustee board. He has publicly expressed his affection for MC and termed his years at the school as among the "finest" of his life.

Ebberts is also a member of First

Church, Brookhaven, which in past years has led the entire Southern Baptist Convention in support for the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions.

The former athletic coach is credited with building WorldCom — formerly known as LDDS — from a small, local provider of long-distance service into a worldwide telecommunications giant and Fortune 500 company with the resources to swallow other companies worth billions of dollars.

WorldCom's latest acquisition was made on Aug. 19 with the announcement that the company will pay \$14.4 billion

dollars for MFS Communications Co. of Omaha, Neb.

The move to Clinton will

consolidate the company's 700 employees, presently working in two locations in downtown and north Jackson, in one facility. Employment at the company is expected to boom as future acquisitions and expansions come on line.

MC President Howell W. Todd said in a television interview shortly after the announcement that he hoped WorldCom's move to the new site in Clinton would result in partnerships between the company, the school, and the school's students.

Much speculation has centered on the future of the present WorldCom headquarters building on Amite Street in downtown Jackson, which was bought and com-

pletely renovated in 1993.

The MC School of Law on Griffith Street in downtown Jackson is nearing capacity, but both Ebberts and Todd said no discussions have been held on the possibility that the law school could move into the company's Amite Street facility.

Ebberts told Jackson television station WLBT that factors contributing to the move include:

- lukewarm support from the Jackson City Council for the company's downtown-expansion plans, now cancelled;
- an "anti-business" attitude among some council members;
- a proposed special tax on downtown businesses.

He said the company considered a number of relocation sites in the metropolitan area outside Jackson before settling on the Clinton site.

Ebberts pointed out that he recused himself from the selection process because of his close ties to the school.



### SBC CP up for month and year

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program (CP) gifts for the month of August were up more than 10% and gifts for the SBC fiscal year were up nearly 2.5 percent over the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

Gifts for August were \$13,101,189 compared to \$11,836,667 last year, an increase of \$1,264,522 or 10.68%.

For 11 months of the SBC 1995-96 fiscal year, CP gifts totaled \$135,935,202 compared to the same period of 1994-95 of \$132,859,801, an increase of 2.31% or \$3,075,400.

Designated gifts were also up for the month of August and for the year. For August, designated gifts totaled \$3,071,865 compared to last year's month of \$3,001,934, an increase of \$69,930 or 2.33%. For the fiscal year, designated gifts have totaled \$136,201,883 compared to the same period a year ago of \$130,330,099, an increase of 4.51% or \$5,871,784.

For the SBC CP Allocation Budget, the August gifts were \$1,298,762 above the budget requirement of \$11,802,427, or an increase of 11% for the month. For the fiscal year, the required budget figure of \$129,826,699 has been surpassed by \$6,108,502 or an increase of 4.71%.

### Gifts through Mississippi CP down for August, up for year

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,166,030 through the Cooperative Program in August, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which distributes the funds.

Total giving for 1996 is \$16,561,228, which is \$791,765 (5.02%), more than that given for the same period of 1995.

However, August giving was actually \$123,232 less than that given in August of last year.

The \$16,561,228 given so far is \$1,040,572 (6.7%) more than the pro rata amount needed to keep the budget on track. The pro rata amount is figured by dividing the total budget by 12 months in the year and multiplying by the number of elapsed months.

The 1996 Cooperative Program budget for Mississippi is \$23,280,984.

The Cooperative Program helps provide funds for operation of the Baptist Children's Village, gives scholarships to students in Mississippi Baptist colleges heading for church vocations, and helps pay for the Sunday School leadership conference at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly.





## Gulfshore summer '96 staffers

Members of the 1996 summer staff at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian include: (front row, from left) Beth Herrington, Bay Springs; Lennie Young, Quitman; Allyson Parkes, Louisville; Christa Cappelman, Byram; Jill Harrington, Amory; Tabitha McGee, Hickory; Joy Pickering, Collins; Betsy Warrington, Lexington; Christy Thompson, Magee; (second row, from left) Chris Towles, Lyman; Kim Towles, Gautier; Jamie House, Jackson; Stacey Smith, Columbus; Leslie Burge, Gulfport; Vanessa Barham, Northport, Ala.; Gwen Dean, West; Shea Atkins, Tupelo; Jenny Hawkins, Columbus; Sara Jo Watson, Philadelphia; Presley Carter, Tupelo; (third row, from left) Greg Woods, Long Beach; Landa Gayle Strum, Clinton; rhonda Creel, Columbia; Christy

Pearson, Louisville; Kim Sisk, Amory; Jennifer Brown, Magee; Krisi Allen, McGomb; Amy Cooper, Grenada; Susan Irby, Pisgah; Billy Davis, Batesville; Brad Johns, Magee; (fourth row, from left) Mark Williams, Goodman; Ken Fender, Brandon; Chad Walker, Magee; Jonathan Watkins, Kossuth; Michael Bock, Magee; Jason Triplet, Gulfport; Jeff Colburn, Amory; James Cheatham, Rolling Fork; Kevin Wright, Tupelo; (fifth row, from left) Aaron Dell, Picayune; Jody Hawkins, Columbus; Brian Gooch, Biloxi; Ben Skipper, Shuqualak; Josh Brewer, Gulfport; Andy Bryant, Terry; Kelly Wheat, Prentiss; Chad Fowler, Corinth; Chris Gray, Pearl; Brian Hibbs, Gulfport; Frank Simmons, Long Beach, manager; and Benji Cooley, Ellisville.

### Searching for Garaywa staff

1997 will mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of Camp Garaywa. As part of numerous anniversary celebrations, some special activities are planned for everyone who ever served on the Garaywa summer staff.

If you are one of these women or men, please write the Woman's Missionary Union office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, and provide the following information: name, address, phone number(s), year(s) you served, your responsibilities (cabin counselor or lifeguard, for example).

Please let us hear from you!

## Letters to the Editor

### Seeking midshipmen

Editor:

Heritage Church of Annapolis, Md. (formerly College Avenue Church), has a long history of ministering to Naval Academy midshipmen. If you know of a midshipman who is currently attending the Naval Academy, please send his or her name and address, including company number, to Heritage Baptist Church, 1740 Forest Drive, Annapolis, MD 21401, or call (410) 263-6680. In addition to making contact with them and inviting them to church ourselves, we will share your information with the Baptist Student Union director.

Phillip Bush, pastor  
Heritage Church  
Annapolis, Md.

### Thanks to Foundation

Editor:

This letter is to express my gratitude to Mississippi Baptists for their support of ministerial students in both college and seminary. I received a stipend from the Board of Ministerial Education to assist me while I attended Mississippi College. Now while I am at

Southern Seminary, the Mississippi Foundation, the Laurel Fund and Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union are helping me. Throughout this whole time the love and support of my home church, Park Place Church, Brandon, has been invaluable. Without the support of each one my education would either have to be abandoned or placed on a charge card. I will be forever grateful.

While in seminary, I am participating in the Michigan Van Program of church planting. It is truly a pioneer mission field. Please pray for us as we witness and that more ministers will accept the challenge to minister in this area.

Dee McCardle  
Louisville, Ky.

## FBC, Jackson, hosts religious freedom expert on Sept. 26

John Eidsmoe, Christian speaker, author, and military officer, will speak on "The Framers' Formula for Freedom," and "What Went Wrong? From Biblical Absolutes to Relativism," on Thursday, Sept. 26 in Fellowship Hall West at First Church, Jackson.

Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., and Eidsmoe will speak at 6:30 p.m. A break will follow at 7:15 p.m., and Eidsmoe will again speak until a question and answer session begins at 8:15 p.m.

Eidsmoe is a law professor at Faulkner University in Montgomery, Ala., and a constitutional attorney specializing in religious freedom. He is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force and holds a doctor of ministry degree from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla.

Tickets are \$5 per person. For reservations or more information, contact First Church at (601) 949-1900. Reservations must be made by Sept. 23.



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## Mississippi educators seek perpetual funding for Book-Link project

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP) — The National Fellowship of Baptist Educators (NFBE) is encouraging its members to contribute to a fund that will provide for its Book-Link ministry until Jesus returns, according to Book-Link Executive Director Olin Williams.

Book-Link is one of the ministries of the organization made up of Southern Baptist educators, which calls itself "an arm" of the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

According to promotional literature on the Book-Link Foundation, established earlier this year to provide funding for the project, Book-Link's goal has been "to establish a fund that will guarantee operating costs for years to come. Once a goal of \$100,000 is reached, the interest could provide from \$4,500 to \$5,000 per year, the cost for shipping and operating expenses — 10% for operating and 90% for shipping."

Williams told the "Baptist New Mexican," weekly journal of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, in a telephone interview Aug. 27, Book-Link volunteers have shipped approximately 18 tons of books to 66 countries and five U.S. states since Book-Link's beginning in 1988.

Hal and Dot Buchanan, retired educators living in Tupelo, have spearheaded Book-Link since its inception, until he stepped down as chairman of the Book-Link Foundation this past July.

Southern Baptist layman Owen Cooper is credited with first envisioning a ministry of textbook and Christian literature distribution. Cooper, who died in 1986, was owner of Mississippi Chemical Corporation.

While in India on business, Cooper discovered the Indians needed help with education. His burden for textbook distribution led to the formation for Books for the World, which primarily collected and shipped secular books, in 1983.

Cooper issued a challenge to Buchanan and NFBE to do the

same with Christian literature, leading to the formation of Book-Link.

Most of the funding for Book-Link was provided by Books for the World until 1993, when Books for the World ceased operation. The Book-Link ministry has continued, Williams said, because of contributions from churches and individuals.

Most of the requests for material come from Southern Baptist missionaries, national pastors, seminary students, and school libraries that operate under SBC sponsorship, according to Buchanan in a letter to NFBE members and friends in February.

"In most cases," he explained, "items are given by churches, retired ministers, educators, and others who wish to donate all or part of their personal libraries."

The current chairman of the Book-Link Foundation is Bill Reeves of Tupelo.

Williams said Merle Ensor, a member of Bethel Church, Aztec, N.M., is Book-Link's director of shipping for New Mexico and the surrounding area.

He said Ensor is responsible for collecting books and funds to ship the books, and for shipping the books. Occasionally, Williams said, the NFBE is able to send Ensor funds that it has received to help with the shipping costs.

Both Ensor and his wife are involved in the ministry although neither is an educator. Williams explained membership in NFBE is not limited to professional educators, but is open to any Southern Baptist interested in education.

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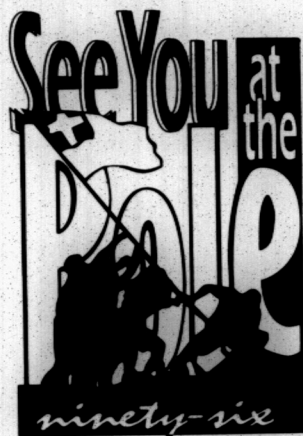
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

September 12, 1996

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.



An interdenominational youth event, endorsed by the Evangelism Department of the convention board, takes place Sept. 18 at the flagpole of many area high schools.

See You At The Pole that Wednesday morning, is a time for high school students to pray together for their schools, their families, and their world.

In advance of that event is a Middle Mississippi Rally, Saturday, Sept. 14, 6-8 p.m., at Greater Bethlehem Temple Apostolic Faith Church, Jackson (corner of Robinson and Prentiss).

It will include prayer, praise, and preparation for SYATP '96. Rebecca St. James will give a concert with comedy by Tommy Toons, and testimonies by students.

For more information, contact Stan Feener at 924-5620.

## SPECIAL TIME IN A SPECIAL PLACE

The Baptist Children's Village, located at Northside Drive and Flag Chapel in Jackson, will be the *special place* and Saturday, November 9, 9:30 a.m. until about 3 p.m., will be the *special time*. That's when Mississippi WMU's Area 5 will enjoy its 1996 Area Meeting beginning in the Chapel and concluding with tours of the campus.

Keynote speakers will be Melinda Kyzar, missionary in Costa Rica, and Ronnie Robinson, director of The Children's Village. Robinson and some of his staff will introduce **Project Help: Child Advocacy**, the 1996 national project of WMU. They will guide us in how to help The Village during the year.

A pre-registration fee of \$3 per person, which will be a gift to The Village, is requested. It will be used to purchase VCRs for two cottages and/or recreation equipment for the gym. It is NOT payment for lunch, which is complimentary for the first 150 who pre-register. Others over that number will need to purchase their lunch at any nearby restaurant. The first 150 who pre-register will pick up their lunch tickets at the registration desk.

Also, everyone should bring paper items, toiletry items, new Bibles, postcards, stationery with stamps, and/or clothing, cleaned and on hangers or folded, if it is used clothing. The Village van will be parked at the Chapel to receive your gifts.

We will take reservations by mail only postmarked on Friday, November 1, or earlier. Be sure NOT to mail your reservations to the WMU office. Use the address on the reservation form below, and be sure to include \$3 per person as a fine gift to The Village.

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_  
No. of Reservations \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed (\$3 each) \_\_\_\_\_  
Person making reservations \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail to: Mrs. James Fancher, Box 428, Florence, MS 39073

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

ATTENTION: All Lads, Crusaders and Challengers

Don't just sit around  
and let

**R.A. Day**  
pass you by!

Make your reservations  
to attend now!



Mississippi College

Grades 1-12

2-8 p.m.

\$4 per person



BRING YOUR OWN SACK LUNCH AND DRINK.

**Registration Deadline: OCTOBER 21**

Sponsored by the  
Brotherhood Department  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"

To register for or learn more about R. A. Day, contact the  
Brotherhood Department, MBCB, at 1-800-748-1651,  
or in Jackson at 968-3800.



Let's pray this day for...

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

"Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Philippians 4:6

Chaplains Seminar, Lee Baptist Assn. Office, Tupelo, 10 am-3 pm. Sponsored by MEAA.

That churches will be able to inspire more members to volunteer for places of leadership for the new church year.

3.7 million unmarried couples live together. Pray that they will realize that this is wrong in God's sight and that they will marry if they really love each other.

**See You at the Pole** (Evan. Emphasis). Pray that there can be more Christian influence in our schools.

New Staff Day and Director of Missions Update, 9 am-2 pm, Baptist Building.

Preschool Children's Festival, Gulfshore Assembly, 6 pm, 13th-noon, 14th. Sponsored by the Equipping Team.

For a multi-faceted medical-construction team to Honduras, Sept. 14-21. Pray for changed lives of patients and team members.

Handbell Leadership Seminar, Daniel Memorial BC, Jackson, 9 am-4 pm. Sponsored by the Church Music Department.

That churches will be able to reach more teens for Christ and that they will be inspired by the lifestyle of Christian leaders.

That the Baptist Student Union can influence many college students to trust Christ during this school year.

Church Related Vocations Banquet, William Carey College, 6:30 p.m., Sponsored by Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries, Discipleship Rallies (formerly "M" Night).

That all Christians will realize that prayer is the mightiest force in the world as we pray from day to day.

That all of our Mississippi churches will establish and maintain a prayer ministry in which all of their members can become involved.

African American Fellowship, W. Batesville BC, 10 am-2 pm. Sponsored by Mission Extension Dept.



## NOVEMBER

The numbers indicate the day of the month and the year of birth. For instance, 1-77 means November 1, 1977.

- 1-77 MISS MICHELLE L. VAUGHN; Caixa Postal 625, 95001-970 Caxias do Sul, RS, BRAZIL; Parents: John & Kathy, General Evangelism
- 1-93 MISS CAITLYN BRASWELL; Rua Barbosa da Cunha 138, Jd. Guanabara, 130173-320 Campinas, SP, BRAZIL; Parents: Larry & Alicia, General Evangelism
- 4-81 MISS LUCY M. GRAVES, Casilla 1417, Concepcion, CHILE; Parents: Eddie & Marilyn, General Evangelism
- 5-85 MISS BETHANY G. FORTENBERRY; P. O. Box 228, Lobatse, BOTSWANA; Parents: Robert & Margaret, General Evangelism
- 8-91 MR. JACOB S. LIGHTSEY; Institute de Lengua Espanola, Apartado 100, 2350 San Francisco de Dos Rios, San Jose, COSTA RICA; Parents: Timothy & Rebecca, Literature Distributions/Promotion
- 9-78 MISS JENNIFER L. GLAZE; Bolanos 141, 1407 Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA; Parents: David & Gloria, Media Promotion
- 13-84 MR. PAUL W. HARRISON; Apartado 373, San Pedro Sula, HONDURAS; Parents: Frank & Phoebe, Youth Evangelism
- 14-83 MISS EVA N. CARLISLE; Casilla 14052, 11700 Montevideo, URUGUAY; Parents: Jason & Susan, General Evangelism
- 14-81 MISS CHRISTINA JONES; 875 Adams Drive, Greenville, MS 38703-6060; Parents: Eddie & Barbara, Pastor
- 16-86 MR. NATHANIEL D. CARLISLE; Casilla 14052, 11700 Montevideo, URUGUAY; Parents: Jason & Susan, General Evangelism
- 17-81 MISS SONYA M. BAILEY; Casilla 3168, Santa Cruz, BOLIVIA; Parents: Kenneth & Ruth, Theological Education
- 21-79 MR. WESLEY A. JOHNSON; 1-15-1 Momochi, Sawara-ku, Fukuoka-shi 814, JAPAN; Parents: Dave & Robin, University Education
- 21-86 MR. GREG RUMSEY; 4527 A Seminary Place, New Orleans, LA 70126; Parents: David & Pamela K., Field Personnel Assistance
- 27-85 MISS STACIA COREY; 7336 Anela Place, Diamondhead, MS 39520; Parents: Charles & Patricia, Field Personnel Assistance

## Annual Conference for Mississippi Baptist Ministers' Wives

First Baptist Church, Jackson

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1996 • 1-4:30 P.M.

✦ Inspiration, Fellowship, Personal Growth, Information and Support for the minister's wife!

✦ There is no cost for this conference.

### PROGRAM PERSONALITIES INCLUDE:

**Katherine Webster, Clinton** — minister's wife and retired MBCB secretary

**Betty Davis, Newbebron** — minister's wife and creative writer of Sunday School curriculum for children and articles for various Christian publications

**Dellana E. E. E. E. E.** — executive director, WMCB, SBC

Child care will be available for preschoolers on a limited basis. Please contact the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department at 1-800-748-1651 for registration information or to learn more about this exciting event.

Again this conference is ABSOLUTELY FREE!  
But you do need to register NOW.



# 1-9-9-6

## Youth Ministers Conference

October 21-23, 1996

### Highlights

**DEVOTIONALS** - Dennis Ray Smith, associate pastor, First Baptist Church, Pascagoula

**MUSIC** - Mike Harland, minister of music, Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson

**SESSIONS FOR WIVES** - Joy Yates, pastor's wife, Yazoo City, certified conference leader for Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

**GENERAL SESSIONS** - Wade Rowatt, director, St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center; professor of pastoral care, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; Johnny Derouen, minister to youth, Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth

### Reservations

Call Lake Tiak O'Khata at (601) 773-7853 or write Lake Tiak O'Khata, P. O. Box 160, Louisville, MS 39339. A block of rooms is being held for this conference until October 1. At that time all rooms which have been on hold will be released. It is necessary to guarantee the accommodations with a credit card or send a deposit of \$45. Cancellation will be accepted if received by Lake Tiak O'Khata prior to October 15. Preschool child care will be provided at FBC, Louisville, at no additional cost.

### Registration

Contact the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, or call 1-800-748-1651 (or in Jackson, 968-3800). It is necessary that your registration be received by October 15, 1996, so that adequate preparation can be made.

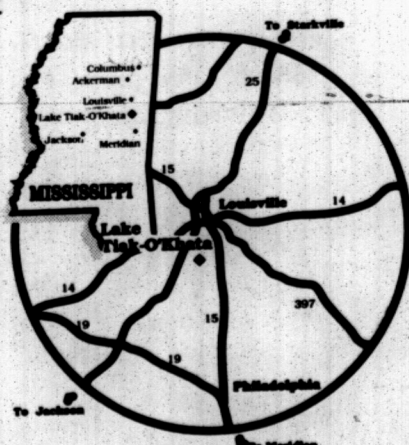
**1996 Youth Ministers Conference Committee Members:** Barry Grantham, Cleveland; David Gunn, Gulfport; Jason Lee, Louisville; Jay Richardson, Greenville; Julius Thompson (chairman), Jackson; Marty Thompson, Madison; Jim Yates, Corinth

Sponsored by  
THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATION-  
PASTORAL MINISTRIES DEPT.

A Ministry of your  
Cooperative Program

Mississippi Baptist  
Convention Board

"Helping to Bring Mississippi  
and the World to Jesus"



Man n  
Then everyone who believes in Him can  
live with God forever."  
(John 3:14 NIV)

Jackson • First Baptist Church  
October 21, 1996

Sponsored by the  
**MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST  
CONVENTION BOARD**

"Brethren, my  
heart's desire and my  
prayer to God for them is for  
their salvation"

"Helping to Bring Mississippi and  
the World to Jesus"

conferences • 3:00 p.m.

**PRESENTER:**

Jack Glaze, Missionary, Seminary Professor

**GENERAL CONFERENCE:** Ministering with the Diverse People in Mississippi

• See them • Speak to them • Relate to them

**MISSION FELLOWSHIPS AND OTHER GROUPS:**

• Agricultural Missions • Campers on Mission • Church Renewal  
• Construction • Educational Missions • Missions Service Corp.  
• Partnership Missions

Banquet • 5:00 p.m.

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

Dellanna O'Brien, Executive Director-Treasurer, WMU, SBC

Reservations are required for the banquet, so please send your name, address and telephone number, plus \$8 per adult in your group, to the Brotherhood Department • Missions Banquet • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Also preschool childcare (ages birth to five years old) will be provided. Include with your reservation a list of your children's names and birthdays (including the year). For further information, contact the Brotherhood Department at 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson at 968-3800, ext. 3934.



## GA Mother/Daughter Weekend

(for grades 1-6)  
at Camp Garaywa

**September 27-28, 1996**

Friday, 5 p.m. to Saturday, Noon

Cost: \$23 per person

**Registration deadline: September 23, 1996**

## GA/ACTEEN DAY

at Central Hills Baptist Retreat

**October 26, 1996**

10 a.m. — 3 p.m.

Missionary Speakers, Music, Food and FUN!

Cost: \$3 per person

Bring a sack lunch — drink will be provided.

**Registration deadline: October 16, 1996**

Check one or both: ☐ GA Mother/Daughter Weekend ☐ GA/Acteen Day

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

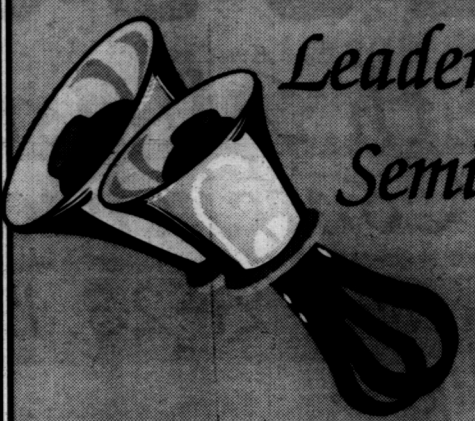
Association \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_ X \$23/person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_ X \$3/person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: **WMU**

Mail to: WMU • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530



## Handbell Leadership Seminar

**9:00 am - 4:00 pm**  
**Daniel Memorial BC, Jackson**  
**September 20, 1996**

For more information, contact the Church Music  
Dept. of the MBCB at  
968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

## Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra Auditions

For 9th - 12th Graders

### November '96 Choral Auditions

5th	5-8 p.m.	FBC, Summit
7th	5-8 p.m.	FBC, Ocean Springs
9th	10-Noon	Southside Baptist Church, Meridian
11th	5-8 p.m.	Baptist Building, Jackson
12th	5-8 p.m.	Clarksdale Baptist Church, Clarksdale
14th	5-8 pm.	Fairview Baptist Church, Columbus
16th	9 a.m.-1 p.m.	Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo

### November '96 Choral and Orchestra Auditions

21st	5-8 p.m.	William Carey College, Hattiesburg
22nd	5-8 p.m.	Crossgates Baptist Church, Brandon
23rd	Noon-4 p.m.	North Oxford Baptist Church, Oxford

(NOTE: ALL instrumentalists will be expected to audition vocally.)

### Choir auditions will include:

- A solo (no tapes) • Sight reading
- Tonal Memory
- Singing their voice part from a hymn  
(all girls will sing the alto part)
- A registration form, which you may request from  
the Church Music Department, may be duplicated

### Instrumental auditions will include:

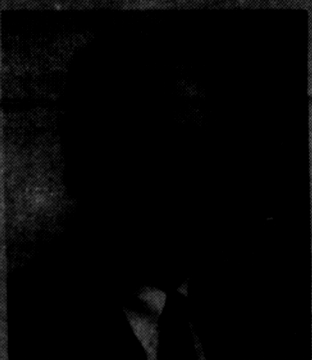
- A prepared piece • Scales • Sight reading
- Technique and tune
- A registration form, which you may request from  
the Church Music Department, may be duplicated

Contact the Church Music Department at 1-800-748-  
1651 or in Jackson at 968-3800 for more details on  
these auditions.

## 1996 Family Leadership Celebration

**November 1**

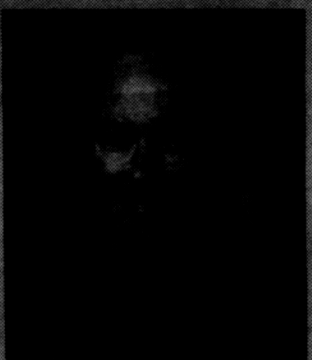
Lake Tark O'Khata, Louisville  
(Humorist: Johnny Flynt, Oxford)



**Bobby Shous**  
Senior Adult Consultant for Missouri

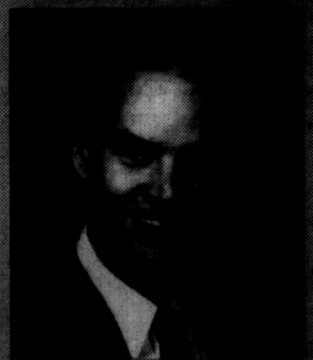
**November 2**

First Baptist Church, Brookhaven  
(Comedians: Cross Country, Oxford)



**Tim Cleary**  
Singles Specialist, Nashville

**Ron Mumbourne**  
Minister of Congregation  
First Baptist Church, Oxford



8:30 a.m.	Registration	10:00	Conferences
9:00	Rally	12:30 p.m.	Adjourn (Lunch on your own)

(\$5 per person at the door)

Materials for the '97 Bible  
Drill/Speaker's Tourna-  
ment may be ordered by  
returning the order form at the  
right to:

**Discipleship & Family  
Ministry Dept.**  
Box 530  
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

### BIBLE DRILL/SPEAKERS' TOURNAMENT MATERIALS

Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me the following number of pamphlets:

\_\_\_\_\_ Children KJV or NIV \_\_\_\_\_ Leader's Guide  
\_\_\_\_\_ Youth KJV or NIV \_\_\_\_\_ Speakers' Tournament

# HOUSE TOPS



**Rocky Point (Leake):** Sept. 22; services at 10:45 a.m.; William Wright, pastor, speaker; covered dish dinner in fellowship hall; 1:30 p.m. singing with Born Again.

**New Providence, Copiah:** Sept. 29; services, lunch, afternoon singing; Ronny Robinson, executive director, Baptist Children's Village, Clinton, guest speaker; James D. Whittington, pastor.

**Friendship, Aberdeen:** Sept. 29; 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; John Mahoney, Memphis, guest speaker; noon meal; Wayne Baggett, Decatur, Ala., guest singer; Keith Carpenter, chalk drawing artist, 1:30 p.m. program; Todd Bowen, pastor.

gram; Todd Bowen, pastor.

**Providence, Hattiesburg:** Oct. 6; Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; noon meal; Ronnie Robinson, executive director, Baptist Children's Village, Clinton, guest speaker; Cliff Lazenby, pastor.

**Fellowship, Bellefontaine:** Sept. 29; services, 10 a.m.; Paul Weddle, guest speaker; noon meal; activities at 2 p.m.; Brooks Turner, interim pastor.

**Ebenezer (Holmes):** Sept. 29; noon dinner; Malcolm Massey, former pastor, speaker; Billy Barron, pastor.

## Staff Changes

**Pilgrims Rest Church, Crystal Springs,** has called **Bill Jernigan** as pastor. He is a native of Port Arthur, Texas. Jernigan received his education at New Orleans Seminary. He is married to the former Karen Pierce. They have two children.



Jernigan

**Paul Truitt Memorial Church, Pearl,** has called **James C. Pace** as minister of evangelism and outreach. He is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary. Ted Dukes is pastor of Paul Truitt Memorial.

**Chester Church, Ackerman,** has called **Philip D. Cooper** of Dumas as pastor, effective Sept. 1. The New Albany native is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and Mid-America Seminary. He previously served Pine Grove Church, Dumas.



Cooper

**Patrick Bourg** has resigned **Faithview Church, Saucier,** to accept the pastorate of Silver Creek Church, McComb.

**Iuka Church, Tishomingo Association,** has called **Jim Manley** of Iuka as pastor. The Jackson, Tenn., native previously served Cason Church, Nettleton.

**Joe Holcomb** has announced his resignation after 20 years as pastor of **Grace Church, Tupelo.** He and his wife will be honored with a reception in the church fellowship hall Sept. 29, 2-4 p.m. He will be available for interim and supply. Contact him at 5083 New Hope Rd., Pontotoc, MS 38863. Telephone (601) 489-8789.

**Ted Dukes, pastor of Paul Truitt Memorial Church, Pearl,** has recently accepted the invitation of Sheriff Ken Dickerson to serve as chaplain of the Rankin County Sheriff's Department. Dukes is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary.



Dukes

**James S. Young, associate pastor/education director at Calvary Church, West Point,** was recently honored with a fellowship reception and a money tree gift on the occasion of his 10th anniversary of service to the church. **Walter H. Frederick** is pastor.



Young

## First Church, Gulfport, marks 100th with former pastors, church staffers

First Church, Gulfport, will cap a four-month commemoration of the church's 100 years of ministry on the Gulf Coast with a centennial week celebration, Sept. 15-22. All former pastors will be present during the week.

Former pastors Landrum P. Leavell, retired president of New Orleans Seminary, and Jim Keith

will speak during the morning worship service on Sunday, Sept. 15. Former minister of music Sid Buckley, currently a professor at New Orleans Seminary, will be the musical guest.

A centennial play by church member Janie Walters, depicting the history of First Church, will be presented at 6 p.m. that evening.

On Wednesday, Sept. 18, a fellowship meal will be served at 5 p.m., followed by an evening worship service featuring former pastor Dean Register, current pastor of Temple Church, Hattiesburg; and musical guest Randy Riley, former minister of education and current minister of education at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

A 5 p.m. barbecue brisket dinner will begin the festivities on Saturday, Sept. 21, followed by an evening worship service with former pastor John Traylor, who is retired and living in Monroe, La.

Former interim minister of music Jerry Nance, currently a student at New Orleans Seminary and pastor of Hildale Church, Aimee, La., will be the musical guest.

The celebration will conclude on Sunday, Sept. 22, with former pastor and former Oklahoma Baptist Convention executive secretary Bill Tanner as guest speaker. Tanner recently retired from the faculty of Oklahoma Baptist Uni-

versity in Shawnee, Okla.

Bob Jones, former minister of music and currently minister of music at First Church, Hattiesburg, will be the musical guest for that service.

A covered dish luncheon will follow in the fellowship hall at noon.

For more information, contact the church office at (601) 863-8501.

## Gore dies in accident

**Jimmy Stewart Gore, 52,** died Aug. 31 as a result of injuries sustained in an automobile-tractor accident in McCondy.

The Houston, Miss., native had served as pastor of McCondy Church for the last 13 years. He formerly served as pastor of the following churches: Fellowship, Houston; Zion Hill, New Albany; Dumas, Tippah County; First, Shannon; and Hardy, Grenada.

Funeral service was held Sept. 2 at McCondy Church.

Survivors include: his wife Nelda; daughter Jan Turner of Murfreesboro, Tenn.; three grandchildren; one sister; and one brother.

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Jackson 957-3762

### INSPIRATIONAL TRAVEL 1996-1997

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**Tour #SP6** Australia/New Zealand. 15 Days Depart Oct. 7. Last call!  
**Tour #HL54** Holidays in the Holy Land. Opt. extn. to Egypt or Petra. 10 Days. Dec. 28.  
**Tour #HL55** Springtime in the Holy Land. 10 Days. Opt. extn. to Egypt. Mar. 31.  
**Tour #HL56** Holy Land Pilgrimage. 8 Days. Opt. extn. to Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and France. June 9.  
**Tour #EU36** Best of Europe. Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France and Belgium. 8 Days. June 15.

Pastors: Call for TOUR HOST information. Contact: John Adkerson, P.O. Box 451174, Atlanta, Ga. 30345; (770) 414-1950 or 800/516-1950.



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# Binary code newest dialect of "Experiencing God" study

NASHVILLE (BP) — "Experiencing God" comes in many dialects — Papiamento, Tagalog, Mandarin, binary code. The first is spoken in the Netherlands Antilles; the second on an island in the Philippines, the third in China, and the fourth in space. Cyberspace, that is.

Taught in at least 30 languages across the world, "Experiencing God," a 13-week study offering Christians the skills to find God's will for their lives, transcends time and space beginning Sept. 16. That is the day Christians and non-Christians alike from America to Zimbabwe will connect via computer and modem to begin jointly studying the popular course produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division.

The idea of studying "Experiencing God" via internet originated with Thomas Kennedy, a native of Canada and resident of Holland, Mich.

When Kennedy's work visa expired before his new one was issued this summer, the computer consultant found himself with time on his hands.

"God kind of used that time to kick this thing off," he said of the "Experiencing God" Internet study which will be launched three times a year in January, May, and September "until the people quit subscribing."

Kennedy said he explored several on-line Bible studies recently, but had become disillusioned with them when the cyber chat about Scripture turned into theological bickering.

"I was ashamed that we had this incredible technology and it was being used to divide the body of Christ instead of joining people together to edify him," Kennedy said. Just as he was tiring of all computer-mediated Bible studies, Kennedy said a friend lent him an "Experiencing God" workbook.

"After the first week, I was so excited about the study that I wanted to find some other people to study it with me. So I posted an e-mail message asking if anybody was interested in studying 'Experiencing God' with me."

"In the first three days, I received over 200 messages from all over the world. I was totally overwhelmed by it," he said.

Kennedy indicated the number of people interested in the on-line study as of the end of August had reached 600 from 35 countries and was still rising.

Requirements after joining the study are simple, Kennedy said. Buy the adult workbook and study a chapter a week — preferably the same one everybody else is studying. Those interested in posting comments on the newly-created forum may do so.

Once participants subscribe to the list, they receive a return e-mail outlining the rules and regulations, Kennedy said. To join, a person must send e-mail to "hub@XC.Org" (some people may find it necessary to put "Internet:" before that address). In the message field, not the subject field, write: subscribe expgod. Those who choose to be on a digest version of the list should write in the message field: subscribe expgod-

digest. People who subscribe to the digest version of the study will receive a compilation of e-mail messages a couple of times a week, Kennedy said. They will not receive mail every time it is sent by a fellow member of the list group.

In his "welcome" message to new subscribers, Kennedy gives the price of the notebook (U.S. \$10.95 + 2.50 shipping and handling), and where and how to order it. For those who feel they cannot afford or obtain the book, Kennedy includes this message: "Note: if you are unable to obtain a book for any reason (country, financial, etc.) please send an e-mail to "TKennedy@XC.Org" with the subject, Book Needed. Include information on your address, etc., in the message text. We will do everything we can to get a book into your hands."

## BNF sets fall retreat dates

The Baptist Nursing Fellowship (BNF) will hold its annual fall retreat at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on Oct. 11-12. Activities will begin at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 11, and end at noon, Saturday, Oct. 12.

Cost options for the overnight include:

- \$20 to bring your own towels and linens;
- \$23 for limited number of available spaces in the guest houses;
- \$5 per meal if not staying overnight.

Deadline for registration is Oct. 3. Mail church affiliations, names, addresses, and phone numbers of all participants, along with checks made payable to Baptist Nursing Fellowship, to: BNF c/o WMU office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

**The Lord's Day Alliance** will hold a luncheon and organizational meeting for a Mississippi chapter at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 21, at Primos Northgate Restaurant in Jackson.

The Lord's Day Alliance was founded in 1888 to encourage observance of the Lord's day as a day of worship and rest. Active affiliates are located in several states, as well as Canada and England.

Jack Lowndes, retired Southern Baptist minister and executive director of the Lord's Day Alliance, will be the featured speaker.

For more information and lunch reservations, contact David McNair during business hours at (601) 982-2406.

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## Olympic follow-ups continue

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Although the Olympic and Paralympic flames have been extinguished in Atlanta, the Home Mission Board (HMB) continues to receive response cards from people reached through volunteer ministries.

Of 2,723 cards returned by the end of August, 1,613 people reported making professions of faith and 1,110 people requested more information, said Jack Smith, HMB associate director of personal evangelism. Hundreds of Mississippi Baptists participated in the massive Southern Baptists evangelism effort during the Olympics.

Response cards are from interactive pocket guides which listed athletic record holders as well as the plan of salvation. People could indicate they had made a profession of faith, request Bible study materials, or ask to be contacted by Christians in their area. They could also report they are not ready to make a profession of faith but would like more free information.

Response cards from people in other countries are sent to the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) for follow-up, Smith said. Response cards from U.S. residents are sent to state evangelism directors who forward information to local associations or churches.

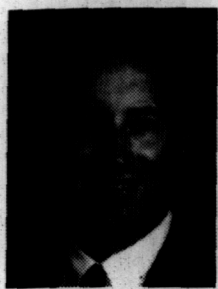
A copy of each U.S. card is also sent to Mission Service Corps volunteer Brenda Johnson who coordinates the follow-up process. New Christians receive packets of material including a "Beginning Steps" HMB booklet. Those who request more information receive four investigative Bible studies by Campus Crusade founder Bill Bright.

Each mailing includes another response card. Recipients can indicate if they are still not certain of their salvation, if they have not been contacted by a local church or if they would like additional information. New Testaments are sent to people requesting them. Other follow-up material includes books from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and an HMB correspondence Bible study.

Smith said he expects to continue receiving response cards through the end of the year. He praised the hundreds of volunteers who distributed the pocket guides and the FMB staff and state evangelism directors for their cooperation with follow-up.



## Uniform Responding to God



By Jim Phillips  
Jeremiah 1

We have three growing boys in our household. As each one came along, it was very necessary that he learned his name and responded to the call of his mom and dad. He had to learn the meanings of "no" and "can't" and "yes" and "now!" We knew that it was for their own benefit that they knew their parents' voices and the meaning of our words. The time would come when there could be no doubt that their mom or dad had spoken.

Jeremiah was a man who heard from God. It became unmistakably clear that God had drawn him aside for the specific task of prophesying to Judah at a critical time in their history. Not only was God calling him to be a spokesperson, but the message he was to speak contained bad news.

In God's initial contact with him, Jeremiah learned that he had been chosen by God even before he had become an embryo in his mother's womb (vv. 4-5). How's that for early training? Before the sperm had found the egg, a person had been set apart for work that would be known throughout eternity. With so much debate about when life begins, perhaps we should seek to understand a deeper principle. Life begins whenever God gives birth to his sovereign will whereby he wills the formation of a baby who will fit into that will. My parents certainly were unaware that they would give birth to a bouncing baby boy who would one day pastor in the Mississippi Delta. But he did. And he does! God alone is in control of when and who will be empowered to accomplish his sovereign will and work. Truth of the matter is, God is calling out more people than are responding right now. That brings us to the next typical step.

When Jeremiah sensed this call of God and even when God confirmed it with a specific task, Jeremiah pulled out the Moses principle. Just what is that? It's beating around the bush (so to speak). Jeremiah marched out his parade of excuses about how near sighted God must be to select such a poor specimen as himself. God corrected him quickly by pointing out that he was not just a kid in a man's body but rather a man set apart as a conduit for the power of God flooding through his life (v. 7). Jeremiah was a quick study for he soon surrendered himself to be one through whom God would communicate his truths.

The truth is, none of us who even preach the Word of God as a profession ever really feels adequate for the job. It's still true that a preacher of the gospel is simply one beggar trying to show another beggar where to find bread. When God reveals a divine purpose on your life as he confirms it with his Word, he fully intends to take responsibility for what he is doing. He's not looking for impressive people but rather people who are impressed with doing his will.

You might think that being a spokesman for God has got to be one of the easiest jobs around. Unfortunately, that also places you in a position of bearing the bad news along with the good. Jeremiah's message was to announce the judgement of God that was to come upon obstinate Judah (vv. 14-16). You would think that the least God might do is start him off on a flowery, positive message to win the favor of the people, but that was not the case. He had to learn quite quickly that along with the message came the assurance of God's constant undergirding so as to not compromise the message (vv. 17-19).

Would you know if God were calling your name? Would it be clear to you if God were seeking to use you in his service? Would you be in a position to hear and respond or would you feel as though he had made a mistake, you know, like maybe a wrong number? Paul declared in Ephesians 4:1 that we're to live a life worthy of the calling we have received. In other words, our salvation experience is coupled with a call to service.

No one was ever saved to sit! When Christ moves us to salvation he also moves us into a place of service and responsibility (1 Cor. 12). I believe no Christian will ever be totally happy in his faith until he has also taken up a place of faithful service in his or her church.

Phillips is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

## Bible Book The victorious Christ



By Ronald Bishop  
Revelation 19

**Celebration in heaven (19:1-8).** Following the announcement of the fall of Babylon (Rome), John heard a loud multitude in heaven singing praises to God for the overthrow of the wicked city. The song begins with "Hallelujah," which means "Praise the Lord" in Hebrew. The multitude praises God for having judged the wicked harlot who had been persecuting Christians and opposing God. Finally God has avenged the blood of his servants, a topic that was addressed in 6:9. When the great multitude sang this song of praise to God, the 24 elders and the four living creatures (see Chapter 4) fell down and worshiped God. From the throne came a voice that invited everyone to worship God.

**The Marriage of the Lamb (19:8-10).** After this John heard another multitude singing praise to God for a special event that had arrived — the marriage of the Lamb. The Lamb represents Jesus, and the Bride represents the church, the people of God who have persevered and withstood the trials poured upon them by the evil one. The key phrase to note about the Bride is that she "has made herself ready." The Bride has prepared herself for this day by being faithful to the Groom. Because of her faithfulness, "it was granted her to be clothed in fine linen, bright and pure." Many of John's readers had suffered greatly and had remained faithful. Many needed encouragement so that they could continue to remain faithful.

An angel commanded John to write of the blessedness of those who are invited to the marriage supper. John was overwhelmed and fell down at the feet of the angel, only to be corrected for this action. The angel too was a servant of God and is not to be worshiped, a timely reminder to modern Christians who are caught up in the popular angel fervor.

**Enter the hero (19:11-16).** After this John saw heaven opened, and he saw Jesus seated on a white horse. John made it a point in verses 11-16 not to mention Jesus by name. Instead, he referred to him in several ways that the early Christians could not miss. Jesus is described as faithful and true, the Word of God (see John 1:1), and King of kings and Lord of lords. It seems that John saw Jesus as the instrument of God in bringing about the end of evil.

**A brief, decisive battle (19:17-21).** An angel then announced to all vultures to gather for the great slaughter. John saw that the beast and the other kings of the earth were gathered to war against Jesus. The beast and false prophet are summarily captured and thrown into a lake of fire. The rest were killed by Jesus and were reduced to the dishonorable fate of having vultures pick their bones.

John wanted to make sure his readers knew that God had a plan and would be victorious over evil. Notice how obedience and faithfulness to God is praised throughout this chapter. John wanted to relay to his readers the message that nothing should turn them away from worshiping God. To deny God and embrace some other religion, such as emperor worship, would have dire consequences. Only those who remained faithful to God and served Jesus would be present at the marriage feast. All others would suffer the fate of the beast and false prophet. It was easy for many people to justify a slight lapse in their faith if it meant that they would not be killed. Perhaps they had families who depended on them. Surely it would not hurt to state public allegiance to Caesar and secretly worship Jesus. John made it clear that this duplicity would not do. He demanded that everyone continue in obedience to God. To fail to do so would bring disaster.

John's message is relevant for every generation. You may not be threatened by Roman soldiers, but threats to your devotion to God are just as real. Only those who maintain their faithfulness to God will please him. Only they will be invited to the great feast when the church is presented to the Lamb.

Bishop teaches philosophy and religion at Jones County Junior College, Ellisville.

## Life and Work Faith's goal



By Cynthia Douglas  
Hebrews 5, 6

God calls believers to spiritual maturity. One of the central themes of Hebrews is "Let us draw near" (10:22). The central message is the superiority of Christianity to Judaism. Jesus was superior to the prophets, the angels, Moses, and the old sacrificial system. The writer uses this superiority to move the one who believes in Jesus into a position of assurance and peace, which will lead to growth.

Salvation has its beginning when we receive Christ as Savior but it has a continuing influence as we learn to walk in Christ, trusting Him with our living.

**Rate your spiritual maturity (5:12-14).** In verse 12, the writer says they should now be teachers but they still need help. Maturity comes from the regular study of God's Word and the practicing of its teachings. After many years of hearing about Christianity, these Jews had never gotten past the basic ABCs of salvation. The riches of Christ are unsearchable, the learning experience goes on forever.

Verse 13 says just as an infant cannot eat steak, so a spiritual babe cannot understand the word of righteousness. In verse 14, the contrast is given that solid food is for the mature. The mature believer has discernment. What is your spiritual maturity? Have you accustomed yourself to respond to deeper truths which change your life day by day?

**Go forward, not backward (6:1-3).** People can be faithful church members and never have a personal relationship with Jesus. The writer is speaking to Jews who had heard the gospel but had not personally accepted Jesus as Savior.

To leave the "elementary teaching about Christ" means total separation from Judaism and the Old Covenant. Six features of the foundation are given in verses 1-2: repentance from dead works; faith toward God; instructions about washings; laying on of hands; resurrection of the dead; and eternal judgment. All of these features were Old Testament truths and were basics of Judaism. However, these only form the foundation and beginnings of what God wants to build. The person who stops here will miss out on the blessings God has prepared. We must go on to "completeness."

**Avoid spiritual rebellion (6:4-6).** Verses 4-6 are difficult verses. In our own Baptist Faith and Message, several different interpretations are given.

Verses 4-5 describe a person who has become a follower of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus only died once, to think and teach that one can be lost and saved again and again is to "put him to open shame." Our security in Jesus is established on the basic truth: crucifixion was enough to bring us into eternal life with God. Each time we sin is no occasion to crucify Christ again. So let us go on.

Rebelling against Christ's purpose is a mark of spiritual immaturity. The sin of rejecting the salvation offered through Jesus is rebellion.

**Imitate the faithful (6:9,12).** "Beloved" refers to believers. He is urging the believers to be examples for the unbelievers to see and imitate. Those who live in faith to Jesus are to be examples for others to imitate. Christians give evidence of spiritual maturity by their actions, by guarding against spiritual apathy, and by following the examples of other faithful believers.

As a believer studies the Word of God, assurance is gained which encourages faith and results in a fuller surrender to the will of God. As God's will is worked out in our lives, we become Godly and our witness to others is made genuine.

Thus, the goal of our faith is to be growing and maturing spiritually each day. Christian growth is not measured by church attendance. Christian growth is to mature in our relationship to God in our intimate fellowship with him, in our regular study of his Word, in being obedient to his teachings, and to live a witnessing life which draws the unbeliever to him.

Douglas is a member of First Church, Columbus.



# capsules

**SBC GROWTH IN CITIES OUTPACES OTHER AREAS:** ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP) — Associations in America's 50 largest cities reported greater growth in the past 15 years than Southern Baptist associations located elsewhere, according to Steve Whitten, director of the Home Mission Board Program Research Department. Mega associations — those ministering to cities with a population of 1 million or more — "compared favorably" with smaller associations in eight of 10 Uniform Church Letter/Annual Profile items in a recent study. Among those comparisons: The number of new churches in mega associations grew by 35.4% since 1981; total church membership in mega associations grew by 20%, almost twice the pace of non-mega associations; churches in mega associations showed a 5.6% increase in baptisms in 1995; total receipts in missions giving were 128% higher in 1996 than in 1981, compared to a 114.8% increase in non-mega associations.

**BOB WILEY RECOMMENDED AS ILLINOIS EXECUTIVE:** SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP) — Robert E. "Bob" Wiley, 55, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board associational missions division, is being recommended to become the next executive director of Illinois Baptist State Association. The previous executive director, Gene Wilson, was disabled Aug. 30, 1995, by a massive brain hemorrhage. Keith Stanford has served as acting executive director.

**DENOMINATIONAL STUDY REVEALS LACK OF STEWARDSHIP VISION:** NASHVILLE (BP) — A study of 13 denominations in America, including Southern Baptists, revealed "most church members do not want the pastor to know how much individual members contribute to the church." Also, congregations do not have a clear vision to help them improve their stewardship, which most see simply as meeting the budget, a study by Illinois researchers found and documented in a book: "Behind the Stained Glass Windows: Money Dynamics in the Church." According to Jim Austin, SBC Stewardship Commission vice president, the study by John and Sylvia Ronsvalle, Champaign, Ill., also cited a similar survey which revealed the giving of 30 million members in 29 denominations has declined, compared to generations ago, from 3.01% to 2.5%. "The study showed that Americans are over 200% richer after taxes and after inflation than in the 1930s and yet give a smaller portion of this income to their churches," Austin said. "While we have access to more discretionary money, we are choosing to spend it on ourselves. Leisure activities have been one of the rising expenditures absorbing the increased incomes." The Ronsvalles' research was funded by a three-year \$311,887 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc.



**LifeAnswers**

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

My ex-husband and his new wife will not allow our 8-year-old to wear clothes I pack for him. This greatly disturbs our son, and my ex will not listen to me.

Since you cannot be there when this happens and your ex-husband does not want input from you, your son should express his concerns directly to his father. This is a difficult time for your son, but you cannot run interference for him all the time. Have your son practice what he wants to say to his father. You can help your son learn to assert himself and stand up for what he believes is important. Is it possible that your son is overreacting? What's wrong with the clothes his father wants him to wear? In any case, stand behind your son and allow him to begin making such choices on his own. Save your energy for the major challenges.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

My father was executed nearly 40 years ago for a terrible crime. I keep it a secret because it's a dark blot on my life. Should I be more open about it?

Bottling up hurt, anxiety, and frustration will eat away at you like a malignancy. If getting this secret out into the open will release these pent-up emotions, that would be good. Before you do so, however, write out what you want to say and read it over several times. Have a trusted friend, Christian counselor, or your pastor read it. You will find objective suggestions and helpful affirmation. You are not defined by your father's mistakes. You are a child of the Creator. Your father made poor choices and suffered the consequences, but you need not make the same mistakes in your life.



## Central Hills summer staffers

Central Hills Retreat 1996 summer camp staff members included: (first row, from left) Lance Martin of Monticello; Jarod Lee, Indianola; Marty Brantley, Carthage; Michael Webb, Vaiden; Paul Pratt, Winona; Randy Roark, Clarksdale; Patrick Alexander, Southaven; Philip Smith, Philadelphia; (second row, from left) Dan West, manager-director, Kosciusko; Janice Mayo, Kosciusko; Pearl Veasley, Kosciusko; Dorothy Mallett, Kosciusko; June Shaw, Eupora; Doreatha Love; Peggy Wason-Tyler, Kosciusko; Travis Dunlap, Pearl; Scott Wilson, Clinton; Keith

Holt, West; (third row, from left) Breck Ladd, Monticello; Matthew Johnson, Nettleton; Jason Robertson, Pontotoc; Chris Myers, Indianola; Michael Winstead, Morton; Brian Brasher, Starkville; Steve Scianna, Picayune; Jason Wright, Clarksdale; (fourth row, from left) Chad Hoeppel, Vicksburg; Jonathan Baker, Ripley; Craig Baker, Pittsboro; Travis Ward, Pickens; Russell Pearce, Purvis; Brad Luck, Starkville; Greg Spencer, Rolling Fork; James Polson, Braxton; Robert East, Ruleville; Danny Panter, Florence; and Ken Bailey, Monticello.

## True Love Waits goes Hollywood; organizers not pleased with image

NASHVILLE (BP) — It was only a matter of time before the popularity of the Baptist Sunday School Board's "True Love Waits" chastity movement hit the big screen.

In the opening scene of Paramount Picture's popular movie, "Escape from L.A.," actress A.J. Langer brandishes a large lapel button that reads, "True Love Waits."

The problem is, the movie's treatment of the Southern Baptist campaign is hardly pleasing, organizers said. It seems "Utopia," the character wearing the button, is a rebellious young person and not quite the typical Christian teen attracted to the chastity movement, according to Richard Ross, a youth consultant for the Southern Baptist agency and True Love Waits spokesperson.

Rated R, the movie is set in the year 2013. Los Angeles is no longer a part of the United States, having been leveled by a massive earthquake and cut off from the mainland by a flooded San Fernando Valley. The "island" of Los

Angeles serves as a prison camp for the nation's undesirables. At the time, the United States is ruled by a president who has moved the capital city to Lynchburg, Va. It is his daughter who runs off to L.A. with a black box full of secret codes. She is the same one wearing the True Love Waits button, Ross said.

"The movie presents the president's daughter as somewhat mentally confused, suffering from having retreated into a world of virtual reality and cyberspace," said Ross, who recently viewed the movie to verify the actress was wearing the button. "Since (film director) John Carpenter depicted the president's family as emotionally and spiritually twisted, he certainly did not place a True Love Waits button on the daughter as an affirmation of the campaign."

Ross said the character Utopia stands in "stark contrast to the very clear-thinking teenagers who have actually joined the True Love Waits movement." She is nothing like the students who are carrying the True Love Waits message to

their high school campuses this fall, Ross said.

Since the campaign's launch in 1993, more than 350,000 young people from all 50 states and 76 countries have signed pledge cards vowing to remain sexually abstinent until marriage.

While Ross believes the directors of "Escape from L.A." used the True Love Waits moniker with a tongue-in-cheek approach, he said he believes they unwittingly paid the chastity movement two compliments.

"First, since they placed the movie in the year 2013, they obviously inferred that the campaign will be alive and well into the new millennium. Second, the very fact they included the True Love Waits button reveals they believe that most movie-goers would recognize that phrase. Satire is only effective when viewers understand it."

### Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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BAE QXWN SYKQHHYX EQX, HBTH MBQEYJYO  
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YJYOWTEHAXK WACY.

UQBX HBOYY: EALHYYX

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Deuteronomy Seven: Six.

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